AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Replace the paragraph at page 31, lines 21-33, with:

From the above-mentioned aspects, the present inventors have used a ferromagnetic iron oxide particle as a core substance and considered from various aspects as regards the compound for nucleic acid binding, which adheres to the surface of the ferromagnetic iron oxide particle. As a result, they have found that a compound containing aluminum together with silicon can uniformly adhere to the surface of the core substance particle. In particular, when this compound is a ~~mixed~~ composite oxide of silicon and aluminum, the effect thereof becomes remarkable. Since a compound comprising silicon and aluminum tends to have a compact structure, uniform adhesion to the surface of the core substance particle is considered to be improved.

Replace the paragraph at page 32, lines 12-17, with:

While the method of adding aluminum is not particularly limited, a ~~mixed~~ composite oxide consisting of silicon and aluminum is preferable, such as an oxide represented by a SiO_2 – Al_2O_3 composition. A compound comprising silicon and aluminum can be present as a mixture with a magnetic particle, but preferably forms a coating on the surface of a magnetic particle.

Replace the paragraph at page 36, lines 20-27, with:

By such heat treatment, a compound comprising silicon and aluminum, particularly a ~~mixed~~ composite oxide of the above-mentioned both elements, more firmly binds near the surface of the magnetite particle, whereby a magnetic carrier (the present invention, the second embodiment) superior in bindability with a nucleic acid, and simultaneous collectability by magnetic field and dispersibility in removal of magnetic field/elution property of nucleic acid can be obtained.

Replace the paragraph at page 66, lines 14-22, with:

The thus-obtained magnetic carrier for nucleic acid was spherical or granular and had an average particle size of 0.29 μm, a coercive force of 5.58 kA/m (70 oersted) and a saturation

magnetization of 67.9 $A \cdot m^2/kg$ (67.9 emu/g). The amount of aluminum in the ~~mixed~~ composite oxide of the adhered silicon and aluminum was 8.9 wt % of the total amount of silicon and aluminum. The content of silicon and aluminum was 23.5 wt % of the magnetite particle upon conversion to silica (SiO_2) and alumina (Al_2O_3) contents.

Replace the paragraph at page 66, lines 23-27, with:

FIG. 3 shows an SEM image of the magnetic carrier. This image clearly shows respective magnetite particles, no precipitate is found other than on magnetite particles, and a ~~mixed~~ composite oxide of silicon and aluminum is adhered near the surface of the magnetite particle.

Replace the paragraph at page 67, lines 12-19, with:

This magnetic carrier was spherical or granular and had an average particle size of 0.31 μm, a coercive force of 5.98 kA/m (75 oersted) and a saturation magnetization of 66.8 $A \cdot m^2/kg$ (66.8 emu/g). The amount of aluminum in the ~~mixed~~ composite oxide of the adhered silicon and aluminum was 17.5 wt % of the total amount of silicon and aluminum. The content of silicon and aluminum was 24.8 wt % of the magnetite particle upon conversion to silica (SiO_2) and alumina (Al_2O_3) contents.

Replace the paragraph at page 67, lines 20-25, with:

From the SEM observation, adhesion of ~~mixed~~ composite oxide of silicon and aluminum near the surface of each magnetite particle in this magnetic carrier was clearly confirmed. This magnetic carrier was measured for sedimentation volume in the same manner as in Example 18 and found to be 903 mm^3 (height 11.5 mm).

Replace the paragraph at page 68, lines 2-9, with:

This magnetic carrier was spherical or granular and had an average particle size of 0.30 μm, a coercive force of 5.18 kA/m (65 oersted) and a saturation magnetization of 69.0 $A \cdot m^2/kg$ (69.0 emu/g). The amount of aluminum in the ~~mixed~~ composite oxide of the adhered silicon and aluminum was 4.5 wt % of the total amount of silicon and aluminum. The content of silicon and

aluminum was 22.0 wt % of the magnetite particle upon conversion to silica (SiO_2) and alumina (Al_2O_3) contents.

Replace the paragraph at page 68, lines 10-15, with:

From the SEM observation, adhesion of ~~mixed~~ composite oxide of silicon and aluminum near the surface of each magnetite particle in this magnetic carrier was clearly confirmed. This magnetic carrier was measured for sedimentation volume in the same manner as in Example 18 and found to be 942 mm^3 (height 12 mm).